

Ser. No.: 10/826,783
Amdt. Dated: 31 JAN 2006
Second Reply to Final Office Action of 06 DEC 2005

II. Remarks In Response to the Office Action

A. General Remarks

Claims 1 and 3-50 were pending in the application. Claims 17 and 19 have been cancelled. Therefore, claims 1, 3-16, 18, and 20-50 are pending.

This second Reply to the Final Office Action of Dec. 6, 2005 is filed in response to the Advisory Action mailed Jan. 23, 2005, in which previously filed amendments were not entered. This second Reply places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this second Reply be entered and considered by the Examiner.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1, 3-7, and 20-50 are allowed.

2. In paragraph 4 of the Final Office Action of Dec. 6, 2005, claims 11, 12, 16, and 19 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. In the previous amendment of 10-27-05, claim 11 was rewritten in independent form as claim 33, which is allowed; claim 12 was rewritten as claim 36, which is allowed; and claim 16 was rewritten in independent form as claim 42, which is allowed.

In this second Reply, Assignee has amended base claim 8 to include all of the limitations of objected claim 19 and intervening claim 17. Claims 17 and 19 have been cancelled, and claim 18 has been amended to depend directly from claim 8. Therefore, claims 8-16 and 18 are believed to be allowable.

C. Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

In paragraph 2 of the Final Office Action, claims 8-10, 13-15, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nierode (US 6,186,230).

As noted above, Assignee has amended independent claim 8 to include all of the limitations of claim 19 and intervening claim 17. Therefore, the rejection is considered moot, and claims 8-16 and 18 are believed allowable. Accordingly, Assignee respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance as the next paper from the Office.

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D. Conclusion

No fees are believed due. Should any fees be due for any reason, the undersigned representative authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 501922, referencing order no. 304-0002US.

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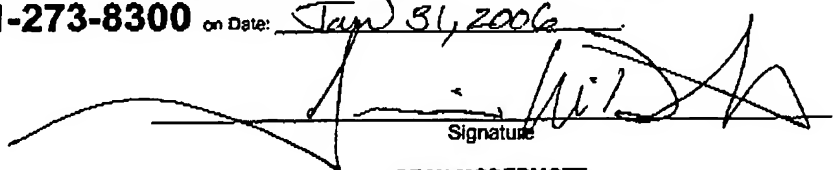
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned patent agent at 832-446-2416 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan. 31, 2006
Date

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